

REMARKS

The Office Action dated July 26, 2006, has been received and carefully considered. In this response, claims 1-33 have been amended. Entry of the amendments to claims 1-33 is respectfully requested. Reconsideration of the outstanding election/restriction requirement in the present application is also respectfully requested based on the following remarks.

I. THE ELECTION/RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that the present application contains claims directed to four patentably distinct inventions: claims 1-10 drawn to a conversion assembly; claims 11-21 drawn to a front wheel drive vehicle; claims 22-32 drawn to a method for converting a front wheel drive vehicle; and claim 33 drawn to an independent rear trailing arm suspension component.

The Applicant hereby respectfully traverses this election/restriction requirement, with amendment, and hereby requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this election/restriction requirement. As required, however, the Applicant provisionally elects claims 11-21 for prosecution in the event that this election/restriction requirement is made final.

Under 35 U.S.C. § 121, restriction is appropriate if two or more independent and distinct inventions are claimed in one application. As set forth in MPEP § 802.01, inventions are independent if there is no disclosed relationship between the two or more subjects disclosed, and inventions are distinct if two or more subjects as disclosed are capable of separate manufacture, use, or sale as claimed.

On pages 2-3 of the Office Action, the Examiner attempts to explain how inventions are distinct. However, the Examiner fails to explain how inventions are independent. That is, the subject matter of all of claims 1-33 are directed to enabling or improving accessibility to a vehicle. Thus, the subject matter of all of claims 1-33 are related and are not independent from each other. Indeed, the Examiner even acknowledges that the "inventions" are related. In particular, the subject matter of independent claims 1 and 11 is practically identical. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the election/restriction requirement is improper, and the withdrawal of such election/restriction requirement is respectfully requested.

II. CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an

early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed telephone number, in order to expedite resolution of any issues and to expedite passage of the present application to issue, if any comments, questions, or suggestions arise in connection with the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136 is hereby made.

Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this communication to Deposit Account No. 50-0206, and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

Hunton & Williams LLP

By: 

Thomas E. Anderson
Registration No. 37,063

TEA/vrp

Hunton & Williams LLP
1900 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006-1109
Telephone: (202) 955-1500
Facsimile: (202) 778-2201

Date: August 28, 2006